



ADDRESS Given at
the Two Hundredth
Anniversary of the
Founding of the First
Church of Christ in Ber-
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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY REV. GEORGE LEWIS, D. D.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4th, 1902

AT THE

TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDING OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN SOUTH BERWICK
MAINE



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MODERN church life in our own State has roots that run back into a somewhat complex, and certainly a very curious condition of things in the seventeenth century. The early history of Maine reads very differently from the early history of Massachusetts. They were Pilgrims and staunch Congregational christians who came over in the Mayflower and formed the Plymouth colony. They were Puritans from England, who were driven thence by the exactions and the petty persecutions of Laud, who came to Boston and vicinity and formed the Massachusetts colony. They were organized churches which came across the water, and they came to Massachusetts Bay as both Church and State in one. They meant to be and they were a Theocracy as truly as were the Israelites in the days of David. It was a kingdom of God they came to America on purpose to establish. No bauble of wealth dangled before the imagination of these Puritans to lure them from their homes on the other side to the bleak shores, the dark woods and the deep snows of Massachusetts. They came to worship God in their own way and to make others worship him in their way too so far as they were able. But religion played no part in the early settlement of Maine. Here it was the prospects of trade that were opened and the hope of large gains that drew the brilliant and hardy adventurers to the

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region of country lying between the Piscataqua and the Kennebec. Capt. John Smith had been here and he had stirred the hearts of his countrymen and set many of them on edge with a longing for the Piscataqua valley and the rich furs and fish and fields of the region. Men came here to trade and grow rich and then to go back home again, as many of them did. But some came and stayed and the little settlements along the river and along the seacoast grew and prospered. By and by Sir Ferdinando Gorges got the consent of King Charles the First to the control and to a large part of the emoluments of this whole tract of country between us and the Kennebec river. He certainly meant to grow rich out of this new land, and the King was willing he should. This grant was given Gorges in 1639. Gorges, as well as the King, was a loyal church of England man, and the intention of all these contracting parties was to establish that church here, so as to offset if possible the influence of the Puritan church in Massachusetts. But at the time this charter to Gorges was confirmed the church of England was in a very squally condition at home. King Charles and Archbishop Laud were getting into deep waters of difficulty. Pym and Fairfax and Cromwell were coming, and were already above the horizon. Within two years Strafford was beheaded; five years after this date Laud was beheaded, and within ten years the King himself was brought to the block. Of course during these years of trouble and of disaster to the English church there was neither time nor power to develop any of the interests of Episcopacy over here. There was

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therefore no organized church life at all on this territory, though there was quite a population here. Gorges's charter was a dead letter from the beginning so far as any ecclesiastical development went. After the death of Charles, Cromwell was the power in England. Then as a matter of course Gorges's charter died, and we were given up to Massachusetts that the Massachusetts idea of church and of religion might be put in here and made to grow. I can not help thinking that it was a most fortunate and blessed thing for the Province of Maine that she passed that early into the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, for to that transference we clearly owe the organization of all the earlier churches of the State. The question was not then as to which of the two systems, the Congregational or the Episcopal, should be born and should grow here. There was no choice. It was the church of the Massachusetts type, or it was no church at all. And I do not believe that there is any one either then or now, not even Archbishop Laud himself, who would not say that a Puritan church was better than none. For one I do not believe that any other form of organized church life was so well adapted to the free and strong development of the early and at that time quite uncouth republican institutions as was the Congregational church. It was a great blessing to the Province of Maine in every respect that Massachusetts took it under her own control. So soon as this transference was made the religious interests of Maine began to be looked after.

The government of this province was assumed by Massachusetts in 1651 or 1652. As the government

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changed, so to some extent did the names of places and the customs of people. Gorgianna then became York, and the old region of Piscataqua became Kittery. This latter included the present towns of Kittery, Eliot and the three Berwicks. The very names York and Kittery testify to that historic, and for us momentous, change of jurisdiction. Very soon ministers appeared all through the region and along the coast eastward preaching the gospel according to Massachusetts Bay. Harvard College, organized originally for the sake of an educated ministry, sent her graduates to do this work. Each military fort, wherever it was, was supplied at once with a pious and learned chaplain. Court sitting in this county issued its edict that all the English children born in the district should be baptized. It was indeed a great thing for the coming State. It gave both direction and color to her development. Matters here began to keep time and step not with the thought of London but with the thought of Boston, not with the bishops of old England but with the bishops of *New* England, the Cottons, the Mathers, etc. Under the earlier (the Gorges) regime John Wheelwright, a near relative of Ann Hutchinson of famous memory, a classmate and friend of Oliver Cromwell, driven away from Boston, lighting at Exeter and then driven away from there, had himself with his friends and (judged by the Boston standard) with his heresies found lodgment a few miles east of us in the present town of Wells. There his form of faith had flourished well for a time, but now the Massachusetts authorities stepped in, dissolved the organization with

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a word, and then publicly proclaimed it to be dead. The present church in Wells therefore is not in any sense the John Wheelwright church. But another church was gathered there and duly organized and started on its mission to the future in October, 1701. Maine may well claim to be a puritan State then, not because of the character of her early settlements, but because Massachusetts legislated and preached her into puritanism; not because of the churches that were transported here in bulk from the mother land, but because of the godly and learned men from the rising halls of Harvard who on horseback or on foot travelled from here to Fort Popham preaching the gospel to the farmers, fishers and trappers alike and baptising their children. All honor to Massachusetts that thus made Maine as good as herself, and perhaps a little better, for while we had her puritanism, yet taking it as we did by the way of inoculation, we had no doubt a larger breadth of vision and greater charity of spirit.

Now out of this condition, out of this soil that had been prepared for the growth of churches, churches began to grow. The church is not always the breaking up plow in civilization. It is sometimes the plant that springs up from an already prepared soil, and ripens the seed for other churches yet to be. A church was formed in York quite a number of years before one was formed here. Perhaps this was because the people who lived in York were better affected toward the ordinances of faith than were those who lived on the Newich-wannock. I hardly think it, however. I suspect it was because York was on the coast and was much more

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easily reached by preachers from Boston and Salem and Newburyport than the inland villages were. That was the old Gorgianna too and would therefore quite naturally be regarded by the missionary as, what we would call today, a strategic point for a church, planting a church in the very capital of a province so to speak. But if to be on the coast was such an advantage, why not then let the next church be organized at Kittery Point? Why, because Kittery lay right between Portsmouth and York, and the people of Kittery were in reachable distance of either for an attendance at meeting and for a minister to baptize their children and to bury their dead. The next move therefore was in this direction. Here at Quamphegan, on the Newichiwannock, and up the Great Works for three-quarters of a century men had been living and working. They were men of brawn; they were men of brain; they were men of dauntless courage; they were men of vigorous enterprize and thrift. They had come into the wilderness to subdue it. They feared neither the gloomy woods, nor the prowling savages, nor the wild beasts, nor the tumbling cataracts of the rivers. These things should all be their servants and not their masters. The Indians should bring them furs. The beasts should be their food. The river falls should turn the wheels and drive the saws that should convert the woods into lumber. This was both skill and enterprise. I am sure if any place on the continent has reason to be proud of its forefathers, South Berwick has. Those men knew what they wanted, and they knew how to bring it to pass. Their story is one of

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thrilling interest for it shows the rare character and quality of the men. The simple story of the old saw mill built on the Great Works river, that gave its name to the river and to the surrounding region (and may that name never be displaced) the first mill of the sort in the whole country so far as I know, is a story to rouse in every soul an ardent admiration for the men of those times. The men of this region were men of strong character and of great enterprise. They had a large amount of what we would call native force. Energy always attracts energy. Strong and capable men, without effort, almost unconsciously draw or drift together into association. They were a fine stock that in the seventeenth century lived and labored and prospered at Quamphegan and Old Fields, or as it had then come to be called, the parish of Unity. They were men of executive power, and were ready and willing to assume large responsibilities whether of church or state.

In the year 1674 a boy was born in what is now Ipswich, Mass., whose father's name was Wade, and the baby was christened John. He bore the name of an Apostle, and he somehow soon felt that to be an Apostle was his own mission. He was a boy of quick parts intellectually, and graduated from Harvard College at the age of nineteen. There was no Theological Seminary standing in his way and he passed speedily from recitations in the college to exhortations in the woods. He early attracted the notice of the Governor and Council of Massachusetts, and was by them sent to the East. Though hardly more in years than a boy he

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had gained standing as a doctor of medicine as well as preacher, and he was sent to the military fortress at Pejepscott, now Brunswick, as chaplain and physician to the garrison. We wish we could have seen John Wade as in 1699 or 1700, he a youth of twenty-five, enthusiastic and glowing because he was young, grave and dignified because he was a puritan clergyman, came here to preach and to crystallize the religious sentiment of the place into an organic form. Mr. Wade must have been a man not only of rich mental attainments but of great strength and unusual balance of character. I have already spoken of that principle of attraction that always draws into association men of like quality and character. I have no doubt it was the rare character of the people here that brought so rare a man into their company. He was welcomed and loved at once. In 1701 the question of a church organization was freely canvassed. Mr. Wade in his record says he discoursed to the people very plainly about the advantage and significance of church ordinances. Rev. Mr. Greenleaf, who some eighty years ago published an Ecclesiastical History of Maine, in his comments upon the organization of this church, speaks of the remarkable prudence and wisdom of Mr. Wade, holds him up as an example to ministers of modern days and says that if his course were imitated many church strifes and schisms might be prevented. Mr. Wade was young in years but evidently ripe in judgment. His own account of the formation of this church is very brief, very simple, and very touching, and I think I can not do better than to quote it entire. After the record of

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meetings holden during the preceeding months, wherein a creed which was rather a catechism had been taught and learned, he proceeds—"March 2, 1702, was our meeting when after thanksgiving to God for such a prospect of his favor as was before us and imploring his assisting and succeeding grace in our enterprise, I gave an account of the satisfaction I had received of them severally. Repeating over the above said questions to them and the sum of their answers amounting to an entire confession of faith in the fundamental articles of christianity. Telling them that they were severally conscious of my dealing with them as above said, and as *each* had expressed his answer, so *all* had as to the substance thereof, so that they were all professedly of one faith. I then propounded whether they were satisfied as to the conversation of one another? They signified that they were. Upon which I read to them a confession-of-faith-church covenant to which they joyfully assented. Then after renewing a word of warning and exhortation to them, we agreed to keep a day of public Fasting and Prayer on June 4th and so dismissed them with prayer." "June 4, 1702. Being Fast Day the Rev. Mr. Pike Pastor of the church of Christ at Dover, Mr. Saml. Emery Pastor of the church of Wells and Mr. Saml. Moody Pastor of the church of Christ at York coming to our assistance: after prayer and a sermon (Mr. Pike preached) then for our direction Mr. Pike etc. taking cognizance of our proceedings and seeing all their assent to the articles of faith and form of covenant—then publicly read—and their satisfaction one with another, pronounced them a church of Jesus

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Christ, upon which they signified their choice of J. Wade as their Pastor." The next record is "Nov. 18, 1702, Mr. John Wade was ordained Pastor," and the next record, by another hand, "Nov. 13, 1703, Died the Rev. Mr. John Wade." It is pathetic. One can hardly keep back the tears as he reads these brief notices and tries to realize how much of history they mean. God be thanked for that young man who had so devotedly and so wisely done his work and had gone home to his reward before he had reached the age of thirty.

The church was organized, and the men, who at this meeting signed their names to the covenant which had been prepared by Mr. Wade, were these: Daniel Goodin, Peter Grant, Maj. Jos. Hammond, Ichabod Plaisted, Chas. Frost, Jos. Hammond, Jr., Henry Nock, John Fernald, Peter Staple, Danl. Emery, Nathan Lord, Benoni Hodsdon, Job Emery, Abram Lord, Richard Tozer, Saml. Small, John Gowen. Seventeen men they were. Men of character and repute they were. Men of social standing they were. They were men who had just been publicly acknowledged by the assembled citizens as worthy to take this place by reason of their high christian character, and also by reason of their social influence. They were in every respect fit men. It was not the vote alone of a small church committee either that pronounced them fit to be members of Christ's body, but it was the sentiment of the Town. These men were held in high esteem all the way from Kittery Point to Bannabeag. The formation of the church was a momentous matter,

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and was so judged. It deeply interested every man, woman and child in Ancient Piscataqua, and especially those who dwelt in the parish of Unity. After the faithful house to house labors of Mr. Wade no one could be ignorant of the vital significance of the movement, or indifferent to it. After his thorough teaching there was no one who did not have some intelligent idea of how that church was going to ennoble, was going to build into a finer character, and shape to higher issues the whole municipal structure of the future. They felt that that was largely what the coming church was for. The whole region had come to feel that as there was in nature a law of crystallization that built the diamond, so there was a moral force to be exerted through this new church upon society at large which should almost resistlessly draw it into harmony, and shape it into a great glory, and the popular verdict was, "These seventeen men are fit to do this. These seventeen men are fit to hold from God, and to administer for the general good, this mighty power to shape and build society." Not a dissenting voice was heard. These men were considered fit by unanimous consent. It was a great tribute to the moral standing and worth of these men that nobody had aught to say against them, that they took a position manifestly so onerous with the unbroken amen of a town in their favor. Had they lived in our own day they would have been called *charter members* of the church. But two hundred years ago they were christened by that infinitely richer and more pregnant name *Foundation Brethren*. That name is a perpetual witness to the high esteem in which these

men were held. They were men of such character that together they formed an association promising great things for the future. If you see the foundation of a building laid by a wise architect you may know from that foundation what is the general character of the proposed structure. Flimsy foundations are not put under great temples or beneath great capitols. These seventeen men and the faith they professed were regarded by the public sentiment of Ancient Piscataqua as a foundation promising a future structure of character and life that would be both solid and high. The phrase no doubt was Mr. Wade's, and it is another token of his fine perception that he saw the difference between a mere *charter member* which means little, and a *foundation brother* which means the ages yet to be. Mr. Wade was a rare prophet. Within less than a year from the church's birth fifteen women had united with it making the church membership thirty-two at the time of the pastor's death. The church chose as its first deacons Daniel Emery and Nathan Lord. They were chosen May 20, and at that time two silver cups, a table cloth and napkins were given to the church by Capt. Ichabod Plaisted to furnish the Communion Table. The other cups of the old and dearly loved service were given not long after, each piece inscribed with the donor's name. As we look today at that service we feel that our fathers gave of their best to the Lord, for out of their poverty they gave the solid silver.

Four years now came and went without a pastor and without any additions. As a matter of course there were services holden in the church with greater

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or less regularity during that time. We are not told so in the record, neither are we told that people ate their breakfasts and dinners, but all the same we know they did. We can not help being impressed with the beauty of the tribute the church paid to Mr. Wade by their non-action for four years as well as by their action. They must have loved that man with no common love, for after his burial they would ask no other man to take his place as pastor unless it were one who had been born in the same village with him and educated in the same school. Those conditions were met in the person of Mr. Jeremiah Wise who was ordained here in 1707, and the first name added to the church roll after his advent is the honored name of Timothy Wentworth. Mr. Wise remained and wrought faithfully and well for almost half a century, when full of years and honors he fell asleep. He left the rare and radiant beauty of our own Old Fields for the more beautiful city on high where there is no night. That Mr. Wise was a man peaceful and quiet in his disposition is proven by the fact of his long and prosperous pastorate. That he was a man of decision of character and eminently wise in council is proven by the fact that he was so often sought as a helper and adviser in church difficulties, and that his counsel was so apt to be followed; and that he was a learned preacher is evident from the many great occasions in different parts of the country when he gave the sermon. During this man's pastorate here the churches at Kittery Point, Eliot and Blackberry Hill were formed. These were the immediate children of

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this church, and each one took a goodly number of members from this organization. When Mr. Wise came here there were three churches in what is now the State of Maine, when he died there were at least sixteen churches, and with the creation of almost all of them Mr. Wise had something to do, being especially prominent in the organization of those in Scarborough and in Portland. One of the leading Massachusetts clergymen at the time of his death left a list containing the names of those men of very superior wisdom whom he had known, and the name of Mr. Wise of Berwick is in that list.

At this point occurs a very significant passage in the story of the church. From the beginning the pastor has acted as the clerk. It ought not to be so, but so it is. Mr. Wise died on the 20th of January. On the 25th, which was probably the day after the funeral, the church met and voted that the *record* should be put into the hands of the deacons, and the next day we have this minute :

“Received of John Wise the Records of
the 1st church of Berwick kept by his father
the Revd. Mr. Jerreh. Wise.”

Signed by the deacons of said church,

Benjn Libby,
Daniel Emery,
Ichabod Goodwin,
Humphrey Chadbourne, Jr.

I say it is significant for it shows with what scrupulous care these records were kept. Had records

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generally been guarded with equal care, history that is written today would be far less the result of imagination than it now is.

Early in the following autumn Mr. Jacob Foster, another Harvard graduate, was ordained. Mr. Foster seems to have been a very good and faithful man, a man certainly of ability and earnest in his ministrations. But the times were evil. There were wars and rumors of wars on every hand, and the children of God must either fight or flee. Here they preferred to fight. The seven years war was on in Europe—England and France, Protestant and Catholic were wrestling with all their might to see which would fling the other. Perhaps no part of the world suffered from that war more keenly than we did here. We did not call it the seven years war, we called it the French and Indian war. Louisburg had been taken not long before this, taken under the lead of a Piscataqua man, Sir William Pepperell, accompanied by a goodly number of men from Berwick, and this had made our valley a marked spot for the Frenchman's venom a little later. It was a time when savages in their war paint were lurking in the woods to kill the passer by, when families could not retire at night with any assurance of being alive the next morning, when men plowing in their fields might expect at any moment to see their houses in flames and their children scalped. It was a time when at one extreme of our territory Braddock and Washington were terribly defeated by the foe, and at the other extreme Wolf had taken Quebec from the same foe and changed the fortune of a continent. It was the period

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of a growing friction between the colonies and the mother country, a time when we were getting ready for our Revolutionary war. Under these conditions of intense stress, it is not strange that church services languished, and that the numbers added to the Communion under Mr. Foster were fewer than they had been under Mr. Wise. The note of war, the scream of life and tuck of drum did for a time rise higher than the gospel's joyful sound. Even the pulpits of the land became sounding boards calling for military recruits. In 1777 this war feeling had here risen so high and become so strong that it swept the Rev. Mr. Foster out of the Berwick pulpit and bore him into the patriot army as chaplain of one of the regiments under Washington. Seventy-five years earlier Mr. Wade had come from an army chaplaincy to the pulpit here, and *now* Mr. Foster went from the pulpit to the chaplaincy. It shows something of one's meaning when he speaks of this church as a church militant. It has been a strong patriot church from the beginning. For years men worshipped on the Sabbath with their muskets in their hands. Many of our members died by Indian barbarities. The siege of Louisburg took some. The French and Indian war consumed them like stubble. Our men swelled the Colonial forces during all the struggle from Bunker Hill to Yorktown, to say nothing of those among us who gave their lives to the country and to God between the years 1861 and 1865, and now after the dismissal of Mr. Foster the military took precedence of the ecclesiastical. It was the colonel and the governor before it was the minister, the soldier

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before the saint. The men of the place shouldered the musket, and tramped to Long Island, to Bennington, to Saratoga and to Valley Forge, while the women and the girls struggled to earn their daily bread at home, and to send a bit to their husbands and fathers and older brothers in the army. They could not have a minister here for two reasons. First, if there was one they wanted he was probably in the army, and second, if perchance there was an available man they were too poor to give him a support. The church as an organization languished for a time, but at length the army triumphed and peace came.

Men came back from the war in 1783, and in that same year the Rev. John Thompson was invited to this pastorate. Hitherto the church had gone westward for their pastor, now they went eastward. The name of Thompson was in high and honorable repute over in what is now Cumberland County. There the Rev. Mr. Thompson had been born. From there he had gone to Harvard College, where he had graduated in 1765. Thence he had gone back and served for some years as minister in the town of Standish and now this people of Berwick, who had passed through so much, and who had been fighting Indians and Frenchmen and English through so many generations, and having conquered these parties one after the other and achieved their independence, feeling the thrill of exultation born of victory, called to their pastorate the Rev. John Thompson, and he came. The church at this time was in an exceedingly weak and reduced condition. It could not be otherwise. For more than nine years not one

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communicant had been added, and men and women had been dying all the time, and yet this little company, thrilled now with its new sense of freedom and stirred with the thought of what they could do in the changed political state, issued their call to Mr. Thompson, and he came. It was an act of strong faith on their part, both in God and in Mr. Thompson. It was an act of strong faith on his part, both in God and in them. The faith of both parties was justified. Under the faithful, sunny, genial and very often witty words and work of Mr. Thompson the church grew, and prosperity came again. Here the man lived and labored in storm and calm, year in and year out, for forty-five winters and summers, and then died as his predecessors Wade and Wise had done with his pulpit gown around him. He left not alone a mourning church, but a posterity which has lived in the land and blessed it unto this day. It was during his life that this house was built, and the weekly gathering of the Congregational society was changed from Old Fields to this spot. Mr. Thompson had been feeble for several years, and in 1824 the church gave him a colleague, Rev. George W. Campbell. Mr. Campbell performed the harder and more burdensome toils of the ministry until the latter part of the year 1828, when he deemed it wise to withdraw from a pastorate where he did not have the full and unlimited control. He resigned and a council was called for his dismissal. This council met and discharged its duty on the very day when council and church and parish and town had gathered to observe the funeral rites, to pay the last sad honors, and to shed

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their tears at the grave of Mr. Thompson whom they had loved so long and well. Could Mr. Campbell have foreseen it he surely would not have resigned at that time, for it left a church doubly bereaved and sorrowful.

The death of Mr. Thompson was a turning point in the history of the church. The life, the country and all conditions of church affairs had become changed. Different denominations had sprung into being. Sects were multiplying. Religious interests had grown various. The old church of the puritans had been rent in twain. Harvard College, which had always educated our ministers, went the way the Berwick church did *not* go, and Mr. Thompson was the last man from Harvard who ever held this pastorate. The Rev. Mr. Keeler from Middlebury College, class of 1826, and of Andover Seminary, '29, came here at once, and was ordained in October of that same year. Mr. Keeler was an able and very useful man, and became eminent in his profession, holding few but long and prominent pastorates. He was here about seven years, and during that time more than one hundred members were received into fellowship in the church. He was dismissed, and succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Rankin, in March, 1837.

The scribe of the council that installed Mr. Rankin was a young man who had lately come to Durham, N. H., the Rev. Dr. Tobey. Mr. Rankin's ministry may possibly be remembered by some of the older persons among us. He was an earnest preacher. The faith was in his blood, for he was a Scotchman born and

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bred, a true disciple of John Knox, and well knew how to make the word of God the sword of the Spirit. The deacons of the church at this time were Asa Hunting, John Plumer and Andrew Goodwin. The list of deacons of this church has in it twenty-four names, just one-fourth of which are Goodwins. Mr. Rankin was dismissed at his own request in April, 1840. He not only received the warm commendation of the dismissing council, but the church at a meeting presided over by the late Hon. John P. Lord gave him warm testimonials of affection and confidence.

The church now sent to Andover Seminary for a successor to Mr. Rankin, and Andover sent them one of her students who had not yet graduated, Mr. William Bradford Homer. He completed his course, accepted the call here, and was ordained in November, 1840. He died the following March, having barely completed his twenty-fourth year, and his grave at Mt. Auburn is still a place of pilgrimage. Bright and sunny, able and earnest as a preacher, another Dr. Payson if there was one, was this Mr. Homer. He was even at twenty-four a man of much performance as well as one of large promise. His instructor, Prof. Park of the Seminary, prepared a memorial volume of him bearing testimony to his very unusual gifts and graces. South Berwick had put her hand upon a rare and choice man, and taken him to her heart. Perhaps no other man in the christian ministry of New England at the age of twenty-four would have been so large a loss. He won the affection of this people as I think no one since the days of Mr. Wade had done. The whole town loved

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him. No one approached him except to love him, and to be drawn nearer to God because of the contact with him. This people would, to use the Apostle's words, almost have plucked out their eyes for him. They did renovate and richly repair the church because of their love for the man. I well remember descending from the pulpit on one of the first days of my own ministry here and saying to a little knot of men who had kindly gathered in the aisle to shake hands with me, "I wish that pulpit might be altered in some way. It is different from anything I am used to, and it stifles me." One brother looked at me with a twinkle in his eye, but with an earnest voice, and replied as he pointed to the desk, "That pulpit, *that pulpit*, why we built that pulpit for Bradford Homer, and do you suppose we shall change it for you!" He felt in his way what I came to feel in mine that if that was Bradford Homer's pulpit it was an honor and a privilege to any man to stand behind it. There are ministers whom to succeed is a kind of patent of spiritual nobility. There are men who seem to hallow the very ground upon which they walk, and such an one was Bradford Homer. Not only has the church since 1840 been a church of higher life and finer spirit, but every minister here has been a better preacher and a better teacher of Jesus Christ because of the abiding influence of the six months' pastorate of that good man.

We reach now the days (and the reign too I may call it) of the Rev. B. R. Allen. It behooves me to be a little cautious now for I am approaching a period well remembered by many, and the sails of one's fancy

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must not be too widely spread when the next man's memory is the rudder of the vessel. Mr. Allen was installed here in October, 1842, and was pastor for twelve years. He was not trained in any of the schools, but was apprenticed in early life (as I have been told) to the trade of a blacksmith. But he was a scholar for all that. Roger Sherman lifted himself from the shoemaker's bench to the judge's bench, and Mr. Allen lifted himself fully as far, from the forge to the pulpit, from the moulding of iron to the moulding of souls. After leaving here and going to Marblehead he writes in this way of himself, "*Education both Academical and Theological in my own study. I am, however, by an act of special grace an adopted son both of Amherst and Dartmouth Colleges, the former giving me the degree of A. M. in 1842, and the latter the same degree in 1854.*" It is certainly a rare instance. But Mr. Allen was a man of such intense personality and of such vigor of intellect that no circumstances whatever could suppress him. It was not the iron on the anvil that could keep him down, because the far stronger iron in his blood would push him up. No hostile environment could check him, for he was strong and creative enough to make his own environment. Born in Rhode Island, his ministry was in the States of Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts, and his reputation was far wider than they. His work here was exceedingly useful and spiritually fruitful, although he did not always find his resting place a bed of roses. In 1850 the question of slavery was a burning question in every northern church. It touched and

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stirred them as the wind touches and stirs every grass blade in the field. It was here and it stirred the pastor, but it did not stir him sympathetically, it stirred him in opposition. Mr. Allen was a *logician*. He was a firm believer in the old doctrine of Federal Headship, and he reasoned in this way. If it is right for God to send the whole race of mankind to hell for the sin of Adam, as it certainly is, why then of course it is right that every black man should be sent into slavery because of the sin of Ham. On the other hand he was *not* a logician, because if he had been he would have reasoned in this way, Jesus Christ died to save the world from the consequences of Adam's sin, and I am preaching and laboring as hard as I can to save men from these consequences. Why should I not preach and strive just as hard to save suffering slaves from the consequences of Ham's sin. The abolitionist's position was one of better logic than Mr. Allen's, and I have no doubt that during the war he denied his own earlier faith and became an abolitionist. The man's face is hanging on the wall in our vestry, and it is a face we all love to look at. His memory is held in high honor.

The pastorate of Mr. Emerson, Mr. Allen's successor, was a very brief one, lasting little more than a year. He was a brilliant preacher, and was soon called from this to a much larger church in Massachusetts, and then the church remembering the greatness of *one* Allen said; "Let us try to get another Allen—there is something in a name." They tried, and succeeded. In December, 1858, the Rev. E. W. Allen was installed, and remained pastor till May, 1865. I think those

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years from '58 to '65 must have been hard years for a clergyman, for the civil war was on, and men from every hamlet in the country were dying on the battle-field. Hearts were rent and sore everywhere. The land was in mourning. It was the sternest, the grandest, the most magnificent chapter of American history. Even the Revolution grows pale in contrast. It was a time that tried the souls of men, ministers and people alike. The thoughts of men were not at home. But Mr. Allen was both a patriot and a christian. He preached and prayed for the country, and he preached and prayed for souls. The congregation was divided, part of it here and a part of it in the South. But the hearts and thoughts of this part of it were all with the warriors and the toilers there. It is wonderful that any church growth could be made under such circumstances, and yet under his faithful work some thirty-five persons joined the church during his ministry.

Mr. Allen left, and was followed in May, 1866, by the Rev. Sylvanus Hayward, who wrought here for seven years with head, and heart, and hand in a most devoted, and in a well-appreciated manner. The church will long remember him. Mr. Hayward is too near at hand to allow of my making any remarks touching himself, but I will say that his name closes a list of truly great names. Not many of them, just a dozen, the perfect number of scripture, twelve ministers, like the twelve patriarchs or the twelve apostles of old, have wrought and shaped what has been a truly great and influential church history, and not one of the

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twelve names is more highly regarded than is that of Rev. Mr. Hayward.

Mr. Greenleaf in his comments on the Berwick church remarks "It has never been large, but it has always been very respectable." He must have used the word respectable in the same sense that Daniel Webster always used it, for we do not give our ancestry due credit if we do not say that they were great. This church from the beginning was one of commanding influence, and I do not believe that there is another church in the United States that has no more names upon its roll than this one has, that can show a larger number of those who have been influential in shaping the fortunes of state and legislation, of college and pulpit and bar, of teacher's desk and lecturer's platform and professor's chair and author's study, than our own. *Respectable!* It has stood always for the highest things, and has given of itself to the great world and to God. The prayer of those who founded it in the day of Mr. Wade that it might build and shape the institutions of the future has been richly answered.

The parish of Unity is territorially the same as Berwick. Berwick did not become the official designation until by an order of the General Court of Massachusetts in 1713, all above Thompson's brook was erected into a town by that name, and the next year the town sent to the General Court, as its representative, Elisha Plaisted. In 1669 Kittery voted in Town Meeting to lay out one hundred and fifty acres of land in each division of the town for the use of the minister. The lot falling to this parish under that vote was, I

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suppose, that field wherein is the old cemetery, running southward up over the hillside beyond the school house. The parsonage and the church were no doubt located at that time, and it is almost certain that a house of worship was at once built, thirty years and more previous to the organization of the church proper. Mr. Greenleaf in his history states positively that a meeting house was built quite near the place where the present meeting house stands. This "present meeting house" being of course that one in which the church worshipped previous to occupying the one where we are now gathered. That house stood not far away from the present site of the No. 2 school house, a little way up the hill on the road that runs past Mr. Allen Warren's house. Our present house of worship was erected in or about the year 1825, though religious services were not holden in it till 1828. This suggests a chapter of history wherein there must have been more or less friction among the people, and this state of temporary friction came about naturally enough. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century *the town* was down there. There were farm houses scattered all along through the region up towards the Great Falls within reach of the river, built like block houses for protection against the savages, but the thicker settlement, the real town, was at Old Fields. The town grew, however, and grew in this direction until one hundred years ago this section had become the larger end. It was perfectly natural that as this section grew to be larger and more important commercially than that, it should desire, as majorities always do, the privileges, emoluments and

benefits pertaining to a numerical superiority. That part of the town would equally of course hold on upon their old and prescribed rights with great tenacity. How keen this rivalry was between the two divisions of the town I do not know, but there was no doubt quite enough for comfort. This part of the town, when it came to be a question of building the new church, would say to that part, "We are the larger. Let us have the church up here. Here are four people to your two to go to church on Sunday. It is right that the new church should be located in this section where the people are." Then that end of the town would retort, "Here is where the church has always been. This is the historic and sacred spot, and when it comes Sunday morning it is no harder for four people to go two miles to the church than it is for two people to go two miles. It is no further from there down here than it is from here up there. Here now is the church, and here the church ought to stay." There must have been, I say, in the nature of the case more or less of this feeling of rivalry between the two ends of the town. When in about 1790 it was proposed to establish an academy here and the Hon. Mr. Chadbourne was willing to give a lot for the building, he took cognizance of this feeling, and hoped, no doubt, that by giving this end of the town the academy he should allay and perhaps entirely wipe out the rising demand for the church to be brought up here. It did not seem to him as though the village could in justice ask for everything. He was disappointed, however. The village was not content to take the school and say nothing more about the church.

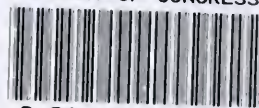
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The request for the church was not withdrawn, and when it was built it was built here. All ill feeling speedily subsided for the people at Old Fields were very sensible folk and they clearly saw that had the church stuck to its old habitat it would inevitably have perished. There is a certain spirit of worldly wisdom to which even the church is amenable.

For seventy-five years this has been the church. Here have gathered the saints for devine worship, and here for generations have risen to God the prayers of his people.

To-day on our two hundredth anniversary we see but little in the past to occasion regret. We see a great deal to call forth our thanksgiving. We thank God for the fathers and mothers of this church who gave it a being, and for their descendents who through long generations have given to it their loyal love. To love the church means to love both God and man, and the whole world is the better for these historic lovers of the church. We thank God for the ministers who have preached and labored here. It is not enough for us to say their record is *on high*. Their record is written here as well. They have contributed to the new earth as well as to the new heaven. With one exception (Rev. Mr. Hayward) they have gone to their home in the skies. But we are glad and grateful to God that that one is with us to-day. He represents them all, and the garland of roses he brings he has plucked from the eleven pastorates that went before him. May God bless him and continue him long in the land that the land itself may be blessed.

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